

House File 55 - Introduced

HOUSE FILE 55

BY HUNTER

A BILL FOR

- 1 An Act allowing registered voters to make applications for
- 2 absentee ballots through electronic means and making
- 3 penalties applicable.
- 4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1 Section 1. Section 47.2, Code 2017, is amended by adding the
2 following new subsection:

3 NEW SUBSECTION. 7. The commissioner shall provide for
4 the submission of electronic absentee ballot applications on
5 the commissioner's internet site pursuant to section 53.2,
6 subsection 1, paragraph "c".

7 Sec. 2. Section 53.2, subsection 1, Code 2017, is amended by
8 adding the following new paragraph:

9 NEW PARAGRAPH. c. A registered voter may apply to the
10 commissioner for an absentee ballot through electronic means
11 either through electronic mail sent to the commissioner or
12 through the commissioner's internet site. An electronic
13 application for an absentee ballot must be received by the
14 commissioner no later than 5:00 p.m. on the Friday before the
15 election. An electronic application for an absentee ballot
16 received by the commissioner more than seventy days prior to
17 the date of the election shall be retained by the commissioner
18 and processed in the same manner as an electronic application
19 received not more than seventy days before the date of the
20 election.

21 Sec. 3. Section 53.2, subsection 4, Code 2017, is amended
22 to read as follows:

23 4. a. Each application shall contain the name ~~and signature~~
24 of the registered voter, the registered voter's date of birth,
25 the address at which the voter is registered to vote, and the
26 name or date of the election for which the absentee ballot is
27 requested, and such other information as may be necessary to
28 determine the correct absentee ballot for the registered voter.
29 If insufficient information has been provided, either on the
30 prescribed form or on an application created by the applicant,
31 the commissioner shall, by the best means available, obtain the
32 additional necessary information.

33 b. In addition to the other requirements of this section:

34 (1) An application received pursuant to subsection 1,
35 paragraph "a" or "b", shall contain the signature of the

1 registered voter.

2 (2) An application received pursuant to subsection 1,
3 paragraph "c", shall include at least one of the following:

4 (a) The Iowa driver's license number of the registered
5 voter.

6 (b) The Iowa nonoperator's identification card number of
7 the registered voter.

8 (c) The last four numerals of the registered voter's social
9 security number.

10 EXPLANATION

11 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with
12 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

13 This bill allows registered voters to make applications for
14 absentee ballots through electronic means. Under the bill, a
15 registered voter may apply to the commissioner for an absentee
16 ballot either through electronic mail or through the county
17 commissioner of election's internet site.

18 An electronic application for an absentee ballot must be
19 received no later than 5:00 p.m. on the Friday before the
20 election. If the commissioner receives such an application
21 more than 70 days prior to the date of the election, the
22 commissioner is required to retain the application and process
23 it in the same manner as an electronic application received
24 not more than 70 days before the date of the election. These
25 provisions are the same as those for written applications under
26 current law.

27 An electronic application for an absentee ballot is
28 required to contain all of the same information as a written
29 application, except that, in lieu of the registered voter's
30 signature, an electronic application is required to include
31 the registered voter's Iowa driver's license number, Iowa
32 nonoperator's identification card number, or the last four
33 numerals of the registered voter's social security number.

34 Under current law, a person commits election misconduct
35 in the first degree if the person makes a false or untrue

1 statement in an application for an absentee ballot or makes or
2 signs a false certification or affidavit in connection with
3 an absentee ballot. Election misconduct in the first degree
4 is a class "D" felony. A class "D" felony is punishable by
5 confinement for no more than five years and a fine of at least
6 \$750 but not more than \$7,500.